

VZCZCXRO1101
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHDO #0311/01 1311258
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 111258Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9044
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0202

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DOHA 000311

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [ECIN](#) [QA](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: QATARI AMIR'S WIFE VISITS IRAQ, FURTHERS
POLITICAL, EDUCATIONAL COOPERATION

Classified By: CDA Michael A. Ratney for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) KEY POINTS

-- The Amir's high-profile Consort, Shaykha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misned, paid a high-level visit to Iraq May 7 where she met with Prime Minister Al-Maliki and four other ministers.

-- The visit was the first to Iraq by an Arab "first lady" and, though ostensibly focused on UNESCO efforts to support Iraq's educational system, was hailed by the Iraqi embassy in Doha as an important step in furthering Iraqi-Qatari political ties.

-- Mozah intends to further open her network of affiliated organizations in Qatar to Iraqi participation, particularly jobs for Iraqi scientists at the Qatar Foundation and scholarships for Iraqi students at Education City, according to her Science and Technology Advisor.

(C) COMMENTS

-- The Qatari government has previously shown reluctance in advancing its relations with Iraq; Mozah's visit is an important step in the right direction.

-- The Qatar Foundation, headed by Mozah, has a number of partnerships and initiatives that could support Iraq's educational sector. Several prominent Iraqis are currently engaged in educational and research work at Mozah-affiliated organizations in Doha. Similarly, Mozah's "Reach Out to Asia" development organization has partnered with Mercy Corps to rebuild schools in northern Iraq. A further political warming could ease the way for Iraq to avail itself of Qatari money and support as it rebuilds the educational sector.

End Key Points and Comments.

Meetings in Iraq

¶1. (SBU) Shaykha Mozah serves in many high-profile roles, including as a UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, and she visited Iraq primarily under those auspices. She was accompanied on the visit by UNESCO Director General Koichiro Matsuura, the UNSYG representative for Iraq Staffan de Mistura, and Director of UNESCO's Office in Iraq Mohammed Jalid. The delegation met with Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki - who also hosted a luncheon in Shaykha Mozah's honor - Education Minister Khedair Al-Khuzai, Higher Education Minister Abd Ziyab Al-Ajaili, Minister of Science and Technology Raiyed Fahmi, and Culture Minister Maher Al-Hadaithi. Iraq's new Ambassador to Qatar Jawad Al-Hindawi traveled with Mozah and the Qatari delegation on the trip to Iraq and in meetings. Two senior advisors from

the Qatar Foundation also accompanied Mozah.

Embassy of Iraq Views as Positive Political Move

¶2. (C) Embassy of Iraq Political Secretary Yasser Abdul Kadir Al-Mouyed was ecstatic in describing the visit to Econoff Fabrycky on May 10. He said the GOI views the visit as an important political step to improve relations between Qatar and Iraq. Moreover, Shaykha Mozah has control over vast amounts of Qatari government spending on education and research and Al-Mouyed hoped Iraq would begin to tap these resources as a result of the visit.

Potential Scientific Cooperation

¶3. (SBU) In describing the visit to P/E Chief Rice on May 11, Mozah's Science and Technology Advisor Tidu Maini indicated that using Qatari resources to help Iraq was just what Mozah had in mind. She wants Iraqi scientists to take part in joint ventures at the Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), and participate in projects with or work for the Qatar Foundation. According to Maini, Mozah also intends to offer special scholarships for outstanding Iraqi students at Education City's six U.S. university branch campuses. Though the scope for future cooperation is significant, Maini said Qatar Foundation expects only low-level interest from Iraq in the near-term.

¶4. (SBU) Beyond QSTP and Education City, press reports also mentioned discussions on using the Qatar National Research

DOHA 00000311 002 OF 002

Fund (QNRF) to support Iraqi researchers. (Note: QNRF is headed by two Iraqis of dubious prominence: Dr. Amer Al-Saadi, a former Chief Scientific Advisor to Saddam Hussein and the "seven of diamonds" in the U.S. military card deck, is the Qatar Foundation Research Advisor and QNRF Project Manager. Dr. Abdul Satter Al-Taie, a former senior scientist and administrator in Saddam-era Iraq, is the QNRF Director and responsible for day-to-day management of the organization.)

Potential Development Assistance

¶5. (SBU) Armend Reka, a senior manager at Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) - a development assistance organization established by Mozah - told Econoff Fabrycky May 10 that Mozah has been interested in developing education in Iraq since 2003, and following her work with UNESCO, the visit is "part two" of her commitment. (Note: In November 2008, ROTA signed a 5-year MoU with Mercy Corps, one pillar of which is a USD 27 million pilot project to rehabilitate schools and fund other educational projects in northern Iraq. The ROTA contribution is USD 1 million and the project has not been publicized by the USG, at ROTA's request.) Reka explained that ROTA's future role in Iraq is "still in the works" but the organization anticipates having a role along with other QF-affiliated entities in supporting primary and secondary education in Iraq in the future.

UNESCO Plans for Iraq

¶6. (U) Press coverage of Mozah's visit focused on her intent to follow up on plans set at a UNESCO conference in Paris in November 2008 on educational systems in crisis. Qatar News Agency described the following as goals/plans presented by Mozah to be implemented from 2009-2013:

-- Organizing an international scientific conference in Baghdad on the Iraqi national education identity.

-- Setting up new Iraqi syllabi and training Iraqi experts

for this purpose.

-- Building the capacity and plans to rehabilitate the higher education system in Iraq.

-- Creating a plan for training trainers and teachers in all disciplines.

-- Developing and implementing non-formal and literacy programs for women, youth, and children.

Ratney